GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3433
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2016
Free Medicines
M. Smt. Vasanthi;Maurya Shri Keshav Prasad;Tasa Shri Kamakhya Prasad

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether the Government has introduced any scheme for providing free medicines or at subsidised rates and medical assistance for screening/treatment of various diseases to the BPL people including SCs/ STs and OBCs suffering from cancer, diabetes, TB, etc. in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the various types of financial and technical assistance being provided/likely to be provided to them?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)
(a) & (b): Public Health being a state subject, the primary responsibility of supply of medicines free of cost or at subsidized rates to the patients lies with the State/UT governments. Provisioning of drugs and diagnostics is supported under National Health Mission (NHM) and National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) based on the proposals submitted by the States/UTs in their Programme Implementation Plans. The support is provided to the States/UTs including for SC/STs and OBCs.

The list of medicines specified in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) which are included in the First Schedule of Drug Pricing Control Order (DPCO), 2013 also contain drugs used for the treatment of Cancer, Diabetes, Tuberculosis etc. for which ceiling prices have been fixed. Most of the states are providing essential drugs, including certain cancer drugs free of cost to patients who come to public health facilities.

Guidelines have been released to the States for prevention, control and population level screening for common cancer (oral, breast and cervical), diabetes and hypertension for implementation. Similarly, guidelines have been released for provision of essential drugs free of cost in public health facilities.

To make available Cancer and Cardiovascular drugs at discounted price to the patients with valid prescription, Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) outlets have been opened at 7 Central Government institutions. Approval has also been accorded for opening of such outlets at 8 more Central institutions. State Governments have also been informed regarding AMRIT pharmacies and M/s HLL Lifecare Ltd. which is a Government of India CPSE, has been directed to consider the requests of State Governments for opening of AMRIT pharmacies at major State Government hospitals/Institutions.

Under the Revised National Tuberculosis Control programme (RNTCP), diagnostic and treatment facilities are provided free of cost to all TB patients. Designated Microscopy Centers (DMC) have been established for quality diagnosis for every one lakh population in the general areas and for 50,000 population in the tribal, hilly and difficult areas. Diagnosis of Drug Resistant TB is being undertaken at 64 Culture & Drug Susceptibility Testing (C-DST) laboratories, of which 51 laboratories are also equipped with rapid molecular test named Line Probe Assay (LPA). Additionally, Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification Technique (CBNAAT) Test Machines have been installed across the country.